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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/757,556	01/14/2004	Roger B. Aboujaoude	ATT/2003-0021	3034
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AT&T CORP. ROOM 2A207 ONE AT&T WAY BEDMINSTER, NJ 07921			EXAMINER MANSFIELD, THOMAS L	
			ART UNIT 3623	PAPER NUMBER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/757,556	Applicant(s) ABOUJAOUDE ET AL.	
	Examiner THOMAS MANSFIELD	Art Unit 3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 05 December 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. This First Office action is in reply to the Application filed on 14 January 2004.
2. Claims 1, 2, 12, and 13 have been amended.
3. Claims 1-22 are currently pending and have been examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

4. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

5. Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because Claims 1 and 12 recite steps for unifying and sharing business applications but do not produce useful, concrete and tangible results.

Under the statutory requirement of 35 U.S.C. § 101, a claimed invention must produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result. For a claim to be useful, it must yield a result that is specific, substantial, and credible (MPEP § 2107). A concrete result is one that is substantially repeatable, i.e., it produces substantially the same result over and over again (*In re Swartz*, 232 F.3d 862, 864, 56 USPQ2d 1703, 1704 (Fed. Cir. 2000)). In order to be tangible, a claimed invention must set forth a practical application that generates a real-world result, i.e., the claim must be more than a mere abstraction (*Benson*, 409 U.S. at 71-72, 175 USPQ at 676-77). (Please refer to the "Interim Guidelines for Examination of Patent Applications for Patent Subject Matter Eligibility" for further explanation of the statutory requirement of 35 U.S.C. § 101.)

The claims do not produce a useful result because the claims do not provide a specific utility. Per MPEP 2107.01 A, a specific utility is “specific to the subject matter claimed and can “provide a well-defined and particular benefit to the public.”” As the claims are currently recited, they seem to apply to the general problem of a unified portal or gateway for providing a service, but fail to disclose a more specific utility as to how the portal is unified.

6. Claims 1-22 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. For a system claim to be statutory, it must comprise hardware or a combination of hardware and software, but cannot be comprised solely of software. Claims 1 and 12 recite a “*business application system*” with “*a unified portal*”, “*enterprise function module*”, and “*database warehouse*”. Although Claims 1 and 12 recite a system, there is no structure/hardware to support the *unified portal*, *enterprise function module*, and *database warehouse*. Because the claims do not expressly recite hardware, a “*business application system*” with “*a unified portal*”, “*enterprise function module*”, and “*database warehouse*” appear to be software per se. Because software per se is not tangible and statutory, it does not constitute a proper system claim. Claims 3-11 and 14-22 depend from Claims 1, 2, 12, and 13 and have the same deficiencies and missing elements and are rejected for the same rationale.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

9. Claims 1-10 and 12-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Campbell et al (Campbell) (U.S. 6,871,193).

With regard to Claims 1 and 12, Campbell teaches *a unified shared business application system and method* (a gateway for providing consumer services) (see at least column 1, line 40 through column 2 line 19), *comprising*:

- *a unified portal* (gateway, portal server **16**) *for authenticating* (authentication service) *and authorizing user preferences and restrictions* (authorize a user associated with the gateway) (see at least column 1, lines 56-65 and column 5, lines 39-43).
- *an enterprise function* (Bundles **112** may provide various types of functionality, an authentication bundle **138**) (see at least column 10, lines 222-36), *for providing a common customer identifier (CCI)* (access control list (ACL), unique identifier) (see at least column 11, lines 24-54 and column 17, lines 64-66) *for users* (one or more users **36**) *associated with a plurality of business channels* (utility services that consumer services **141** can access) *of a plurality of enterprises* (Authorized third party bundles **140**) (see at least column 11, lines 55-66), *wherein said enterprise function associates a CCI associated with each enterprise to each user accessing said unified portal* (Portal-page bundle **132** provides a user interface to user **36** at customer premises **12** to allow the user to interact with bundles **140**) (see at least column 10, lines 57-61).
- *an integrated business applications system* (Application-Programmer-Interface bundle **135**) *for integrating a plurality of business applications across products and services* (comprise software modules that define functionality in utility services that consumer services **141** can access), *said integrated business applications being*

*responsive to authorized user selections of at least one business application from said unified portal (authorized third party bundles **140** may include functionality for controlling devices **36** when the devices are light switches, climate controls) (see at least column 11, line 55 through column 12, line 13).*

- *a database warehouse (Database **42**) for storing information associated with said business channels of said plurality of enterprises, each user, and said products and services (see at least column 6, lines 18-24, lines 59-65, column 11, lines 30-33).*

With regard to Claims 2 and 13, Campbell teaches *wherein said enterprise function associates a plurality of sub-enterprise entities associated with said user (stock trading capabilities, home automation system, grocery store) (see at least column 9, lines 26-37).*

With regard to Claims 3 and 14, Campbell teaches *wherein said plurality of business channels comprise at least one of a customer channel (consumer services **141**, utility services), a sales channel (to place a time-sensitive stock purchase) (see at least column 8, lines 7-12), an alliances channel (External network interface **106**), and an internal operations channel (Internal network interface **104**, Bluetooth interface) (see at least column 8, lines 47-65).*

With regard to Claims 4 and 15, Campbell teaches *wherein said plurality of business applications comprises an ordering application (bundles **112** may provide the ability to order groceries) (see at least column 9, lines 30-35), a maintenance application (maintenance bundle **137**), and a billing application (billing bundle **134**) (see at least column 10, lines 22-36).*

With regard to Claims 5 and 16, Campbell teaches *wherein each of said plurality of business applications are integrated across products and technologies associated with said users of said business channels (provides a user interface, to allow the user to interact wit bundles 140) (see at least column 10, lines 57-61).*

With regard to Claims 6 and 17, Campbell teaches *wherein said database warehouse comprises a virtual unified database* (Operating system layer **124** comprises an operating system operable to support Java virtual machine layer **122** and OSGi layer **120** on the hardware used) (see at least column 9, lines 23-25) *and is updated based on actions taken by said plurality of business applications in response to said user selections* (provisioning bundle **130** may retrieve utility bundles, authorized third party bundles **140** and updates to bundles **112** from portal server **16** using web server **44**) (see at least column 10, lines 37-56).

With regard to Claims 7 and 18, Campbell teaches *wherein said CCI is associated with at least one master customer number (MCN)* (generate a unique value based on the characteristics of a particular bundle **112**), *where each of said MCNs is associated with a business sub-entity of said enterprise* (a company may further identify a particular bundle **112** by applying further cryptographic transformations to the unique value associated with the company) (see at least column 10, lines 4-18).

With regard to Claims 8 and 19, Campbell teaches *wherein said plurality of business applications* (Profile service **176**) *utilize said MCN to retrieve information* (retrieve and store profile information) *from said database warehouse* (in database **42** at portal server **176**) (see at least column 13, lines 43-55).

With regard to Claims 9 and 20, Campbell teaches *wherein said unified portal is a host for accessing said plurality of business applications* (Portal-page bundle **132** provides a user interface to user **36** at customer premises **12** to allow the user to interact with bundles **140**) (see at least column 10, lines 57-61).

With regard to Claims 10 and 21, Campbell teaches *wherein said CCI (unique identifier) is utilized to associate a user (associated with each user 36) with an enterprise, and provide indicia of priority for servicing an enterprise customer* (Profile service 176 may contain preferences used to provide customized presentations of information to users 36) (see at least column 13, lines 56-66).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:
- (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.
11. Claims 11 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Campbell as applied to Claims 1-10 and 12-21 above, and further in view of Nichols et al (Nichols) (U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0055652).

With regard to Claims 11 and 22, Campbell teaches the system and method above in Claims 1-10 and 12-21. Campbell does not specifically teach *wherein said unified portal comprises an interface for providing graphical and textual information*. Nichols teaches *wherein said unified portal comprises and interface for providing graphical and textual information* (interface homepage screen 220 for the Portal) in analogous art of a private network exchange with multiple service providers for the purposes of, "The white pages is an application that allows

a user to view the directory services in sorted lists” (see at least paragraphs 0131-0135 and FIGS. 1-27).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the interface homepage screen **220** for the Portal as taught by Nichols with the gateway for providing consumer services method of Campbell. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so for the benefit of an enhanced user-friendly GUI displaying detailed consumer services (Nichols, paragraphs 0131-0135 and FIGS. 1-27).

Conclusion

12. The following prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

- Beck et al (U.S. 6,381,640) discloses a method and apparatus for automated personalization and presentation of workload assignments to agents within a multimedia communication center.
- Brownhill et al (U.S. 7,266,589) discloses a service-portal enabled automation control module (ACM).
- Valtchev et al, “Service Gateway Architecture for a Smart Home”, IEEE Communications Magazine, April 2002, discloses an implementation of the OSGi standard that enhances the standard and integrates many existing home protocols and home networks.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to THOMAS MANSFIELD whose telephone number is (571)270-1904. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 8:30 am-6 pm, alt. Fridays.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 571-272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/T. M./
Examiner, Art Unit 3623

30 April 2008
Thomas Mansfield

/C. Michelle Tarae/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3623